

REMARKS

With this submission, claims 1, 3, 7-12, and 14-30 are pending.

Claim 1 is amended to recite “an elongate housing comprising a hollow enclosure with at least one opening, wherein said elongate housing is at least partially translucent;

a plurality of light sources arranged at intervals within said hollow enclosure; and

a fastener, separate from said elongate housing, for fastening said elongate housing to a surface;

wherein said housing overlies the plurality of light sources and diffuses, disperses, or scatters light emitted by the light sources such that individuals of the plurality of light sources are substantially not distinguishable when activated and viewed from outside said housing.”

Claims 1, 3-7, 9-13, 19, 23-28 and 38 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Vernondier, U.S. Patent 4,994,944, in view of Merritt, U.S. Patent 4,434,455. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection. The combination of Vernondier and Merritt does not teach “an elongate housing comprising a hollow enclosure . . . and a fastener, separate from said elongate housing, for fastening said elongate housing to a surface” as recited in claim 1. Rather, Vernondier’s Fig. 4, for example, illustrates a cover that snaps over a track. The cover and the track are separate pieces. The track is integrated with a surface to which the track is attached. Thus, Vernondier lacks both the “elongate housing comprising a hollow enclosure” and the “fastener separate from the elongate housing” recited in claim 1. Merritt adds nothing to the deficiencies of Vernondier. According claim 1 distinguishes over the combination of Vernondier and Merritt.

Claims 3, 7, 9-12, 19, and 23-28 depend from claim 1 and are therefore allowable over the combination of Vernondier and Merritt for at least the reasons stated above for claim 1. In addition, with regard to claim 3, Applicant can find no teaching in either Vernondier or Merritt of “multiple scattering elements” in the housing, as recited in claim 3. Accordingly,

claim 3 distinguishes over Vernondier and Merritt for this additional reason. Claims 4-6, 13, and 38 are canceled.

Claim 8 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Vernondier in view of Merritt and further in view of JP 09258676. Claim 8 depends from claim 1. JP 09258676 adds nothing to the deficiencies of Vernondier and Merritt with respect to claim 1, accordingly claim 8 is allowable for at least the reasons stated above for claim 1.

Claims 14-18 and 32-37 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Vernondier in view of Merritt and further in view of Roossine et al., U.S. Patent 4,482,944. Claims 14-18 depend from claim 1. Roossine et al. adds nothing to the deficiencies of Vernondier and Merritt with respect to claim 1, accordingly claims 14-18 are allowable for at least the reasons stated above for claim 1. Claims 32-37 are canceled.

Claims 20-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Vernondier in view of Merritt and further in view of Rouso et al., U.S. Patent 5,765,938. Claims 20-22 depend from claim 1. Rouso et al. adds nothing to the deficiencies of Vernondier and Merritt with respect to claim 1, accordingly claims 20-22 are allowable for at least the reasons stated above for claim 1.

Claims 29-31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Vernondier in view of Merritt and further in view of Wood, U.S. Patent 5,404,279. Claims 29 and 30 depend from claim 1. Wood adds nothing to the deficiencies of Vernondier and Merritt with respect to claim 1, accordingly claims 29 and 30 are allowable for at least the reasons stated above for claim 1. Claim 31 is canceled.

Claims 39 and 40 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rouso et al., U.S. Patent 5,765,938. Claims 39 and 40 are canceled.

In view of the above arguments, Applicants respectfully request allowance of all pending claims. Should the Examiner have any questions, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned at (408) 382-0480.

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Respectfully submitted,



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ATTACHMENT A

IN THE CLAIMS

Claims are amended as follows:

1. (Thrice Amended) A strip lighting device which includes:

an elongate housing comprising a hollow enclosure with at least one opening, wherein said elongate housing [that] is at least partially translucent;

a [multiplicity] plurality of light sources arranged at intervals within said [housing] hollow enclosure; and

a fastener, separate from said elongate housing, for fastening said elongate housing to a surface;

wherein said housing overlies the plurality of light sources and diffuses, disperses, or scatters light emitted by the light sources such that individuals of the plurality of light sources are [substantially not visible to human eyes when not activated and viewed from outside the housing, and] substantially not distinguishable when activated and viewed from outside said housing[; and

means to diffuse, disperse or scatter light from said light sources whereby on activation of the light sources, said housing glows when viewed from the outside so as to form a strip or line of light].

3. (Twice Amended) A strip lighting device according to claim 1 wherein the housing includes multiple scattering elements [so that said optical effect includes a sparkling effect].

8. (Twice Amended) A strip lighting device according to claim 1 wherein an outer [or front] face of the elongate housing is [defined by a] transversely domed or convex [segment].

9. (Twice Amended) A strip lighting device according to claim 1 wherein said housing is [solid, being moulded about said light sources or] a single piece of material having one or more cavities to receive said light sources.

10. (Twice Amended) A strip lighting device to claim 1 wherein said housing is a single piece of [is] hollow material [and defines] comprising a passageway in the hollow portion extending longitudinally of the housing, and wherein said light sources are disposed in said passageway.

11. (Twice Amended) A strip lighting device according to claim 1 wherein said elongate housing [is] has a [plastics extrusion of] substantially uniform cross-section.

14. (Twice Amended) A strip lighting device according to claim 1 [13] wherein said [housing defines an enclosure for the light sources and said mounting means includes] fastener comprises a mounting rail adapted to be fastened to said surface, and cooperable means on the rail and on said housing for effecting a snap or sliding engagement of the housing to the rail so that the housing is generally parallel to the rail.

18. (Twice Amended) A strip lighting device according to claim [13] 1 further [including] comprising a face that provides a substantially planar rear engagement when the device is fastened to a surface.

19. (Twice Amended) A strip lighting device according to claim 1 further [including means] comprising a connector to couple the housing to other similar housings or to other components.

20. (Thrice Amended) A strip lighting device according to claim 19 [further including connector means to physically couple said elongate housing to a similar housing of a further device whereby the housings may] wherein said connector permits said housing and said other similar housings or other components to be relatively longitudinally displaced by thermal explosion or building subsidence, without being uncoupled.

21. (Amended) A strip lighting device according to claim 20 wherein said connector [means includes] comprises an integral [moulded] molded body which defines a pair of generally tubular portions slidably engageable with the respective said housings so that their interiors are in communication within the connector, wherein said integral [moulded] molded body further defines a relatively thin wall portion between said generally tubular portions, said thin wall portion being resiliently deformable to compensate for relative variations in the relative positions of the generally tubular portions.

22. (Amended) A strip lighting device according to claim 21 wherein said integral [moulded] molded body is in a material adopted to engage and sealingly grasp the respective said housings.

24. (Amended) A strip lighting device according to claim 23 wherein said means to electrically a physically interconnect includes:

an integral [moulded] molded body with features which define spaced generally parallel channels or passages open at their outer ends to receive respective end fingers of the respective said strips, whereby the strips are aligned and generally co-planar;

electrically conductive contact means in said channels or passages for engaging complementary contacts on said strips when said fingers are received in the channels [or fingers];

means carried by said body electrically connecting each of the contact means for one strip carried by said body with one or more of the contact means for the other strip; and

resiliently deformable means on said body for latching said body to each of said strips.

25. (Amended) A strip lighting device according to claim 24 wherein said spaced channels are arranged along opposite sides of the integral [moulded] molded body, and open laterally from the body.

26. (Twice Amended) A strip lighting device according to claim 24 wherein said resiliently deformable latch means is provided as a pair of deflectable tongue portions with lugs, which tongue portions are defined by slits in a web portion of the integral [moulded] molded body.